Language Learning

A Quarterly Journal of Applied Linguistics

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Language Learning

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EDITORIAL

SUCCESSFUL TEACHING presupposes a thorough knowledge of a general range of subject matter which may be taught, as well as an understanding of the specific needs of students. When the subject matter to be learned is language, the techniques of linguistic science furnish, we believe, the best tool for acquiring the knowledge necessary for successful teaching. One matter of great practical value in teaching or learning a foreign language is a clear view of the nature of language itself. A scientific definition of language must include at least the following points:

First, *a language is a system*. From the smallest significant units
—the phonemes—up through the largest structural entities—the
sentences—systematization is everywhere apparent. This point is
extremely important, of course, because of the remarkable aptitude
of the human nervous mechanism for apprehending systems. Learn-
ing makes real progress when language is approached as a system;
whereas only confusion can result from the attitude that a language
is an amorphous group of words.

Second, *a language is a system of communication*. This qualified
statement is necessary if language is to be set apart from a multitude
of other systems which also form the subject matter of learning.
It may be noted in passing that successful classroom exercises
usually keep the communicative nature of language uppermost in
mind.

Third, *the ultimate units of language are vocal sounds*. This
factor separates language from all other systems of communication:
even writing proves to be merely a secondary method of identifying
language, without truly being language. The pedagogical implica-
tions of the vocal nature of language are perhaps the most important
of all. When, because of the needs of students, it is desirable to
teach a "reading knowledge" of a foreign language, it is nevertheless
expedient to retain contact with the vocal reality of the language
wherever possible. When the needs of students are not so specialized
as to require a reading course, the best program is one that aims
at oral mastery of the most useful sector of the language.

We must always evaluate any statement or proposal about lan-
guage learning in the light of the nature of language. The actual
problem in learning a foreign language is that of acquiring a new
set of articulatory and auditory habits for use in communication.
For such a problem there can be no substitute for intelligently
directed, varied, and frequently repeated practice.

D.W.R.

PROBLEMS IN THE TEACHING OF PRACTICAL PHONEMICS

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CERTAIN TYPES of students wish to obtain enough training in linguistics to be able to transcribe with adequate symbols a language which hitherto has been unwritten. Ethnologists may want to record names for cultural objects or institutions; travelers may wish to record place names; educators, and especially missionaries, may wish to reduce a language to writing and prepare in it a literature for the natives to read.

These students tend to insist on receiving in the classroom a practical working knowledge of linguistics but to hearken listlessly to the underlying theory and history of the science. For them to continue the course it is not sufficient that the material *be* practical—it must also *appear* practical. The information must contribute obviously to their phonetic ability early in the term and furthermore must appeal to their "common sense" for justification of its premises.

In the classes of the Summer Institute of Linguistics,[1] a school which prepares anthropologists, ethnologists, missionaries, and linguists in the techniques of analyzing hitherto unwritten languages, the practicality of phonetics and phonemics is proved to the students in various ways:

(1) Before any theory is presented as such, two members of the staff give a demonstration of methods of analysis. A speaker of some language unknown to students and staff is asked by way of English to tell the class how he says various items in his language. The staff members write the material on the blackboard in tentative phonetic script and discuss various orthographical difficulties as they arise. Grammatical forms are similarly recorded, analyzed, and discussed. By the time this six-hour demonstration is well under way,

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[1] With headquarters in Glendale, California, and with academic sessions on the campus of the University of Oklahoma, at Norman, and branch sessions at Caronport, Saskatchewan, Canada.

the class has usually turned into an open forum, with students volunteering questions and suggestions.

Since this material represents a very close approximation to the actual situation in which many of them will soon be immersed, the students listen attentively to large amounts of inductively developed theory which they would otherwise not readily accept.

(2) At the end of the summer session, speakers of various languages (mostly American Indians of various tribes) are brought to the campus. Regular classes are suspended, and the students individually attempt initial analysis of a language, under the supervision of the staff. Each year when the initial demonstration has been given (with the statement that the students will be duplicating the methodology at the end of the summer) student morale has been very high. They have passed from demonstration to theory without protest, since they have already seen that the theory is a practical necessity; by the end of the summer they have become impatient to try analysis themselves, and have entered upon it enthusiastically. In summers during which the initial demonstration was omitted or delayed, student morale has proved difficult to maintain, since they have not seen the practicality of the materials early enough to appreciate them.

(3) Classroom procedure and theory is linked as closely as possible to field procedure. Step-by-step analytical techniques are taught in the theory classes in such a way that the student may apply them in that same order, with some success, in his work with an informant at the end of the summer.

Before a theory of orthography formation can be assimilated and practiced, the student needs drill in the analysis, reproduction, and transcription of sounds. Yet many students are loath to try to pronounce sounds strange to them for fear of feeling awkward or appearing queer to their colleagues. Initial drills are necessary, therefore, to reestablish a childlike readiness for mimicry. In the Institute classes the best success in thus establishing readiness to pronounce new sounds has been obtained through reading passages marked for American English intonation, and concomitant attempts to imitate general voice quality through progressive lip rounding, various front and back tongue positions, differences of speed and voice height, and the like, as well as class mimicry of people speaking

other dialects of English. The student who survives the initial shock of such rough public treatment is ready for rapid learning of individual sounds and possesses general vocal flexibility and linguistic attitudes which at times prove much more important than the attainment of the ability to pronounce certain specific foreign sounds themselves.

The learning of difficult sounds—their recognition, pronunciation, and transcription from dictated forms—needs much drill. Such instruction requires almost individual attention. For a large class this may be difficult to arrange. In the Institute last summer, the beginning class at Norman had approximately 180 students. During the first nine weeks each student had an hour per day of phonetic drill in sections containing four, five, or six students. The thirty to forty-three sections were handled by fifteen to twenty-two instructors; the grammar department and the Canadian branch loaned extra drill masters the first week in order to get this concentration.

This number of thoroughly trained and experienced lecturers in phonetics is difficult to obtain for a single school. Accordingly the Institute brings back from field work many of its younger research members for use on the teaching staff. In order to guarantee uniformity of instruction the phonetic staff assembles each day for a briefing session. The more experienced members of the staff present and explain a lesson plan and check to be sure that each drill master can handle with facility the day's quota of sound types and dictation exercises. The large amount of drill and individual attention contributes to student morale and feeling of progress.

The assumptions which must be mastered before phonemic procedures can be adequately applied are numerous, intricate, and in some important instances still debatable. If the beginning student is presented with many of these, he tends to become uncertain and hopeless. Even the definition of the name of the course—Phonemics—can take half a semester of involved discussions. In order to prevent wasted time and loss of interest it is highly desirable to reduce these phases of the course to a minimum. Thus a "phoneme" is defined as one of the units of sound which the student finds as a result of the procedures given him; this postpones the query, "What is a phoneme?" until the answer is less mysterious or until it seems less important to get an answer in a theoretical form. Also, many

of the assumptions are, as such, ignored (or put into sections of the
text which the beginner does not need to study thoroughly), and
the crucial theory is summarized in four basic premises that can
be easily remembered even from the start of the course, that can
serve as a background for each of the analytical procedures or ex-
tended asumptions, and that can be explained and defended more
or less successfully in terms of "common sense."

These premises and their explanations are briefly as follows:
(1) Sounds tend to slur into their environments. Since sounds are
made by physiological movements (of tongue, lips, and so on), and
these movements fade into one another, the sounds likewise will re-
flect the articulatory slurring. If it can be demonstrated that two
different sounds, though somewhat similar, could not have been
differentiated by their respective environments, then the difference
is pertinent to the language and must be symbolized in a practical
orthography. So [s] and [ʃ] are similar, but in "sip" and "ship"
the sounds following them are identical and could not have been
responsible for causing [s] to slur to [ʃ]; the two must therefore be
treated as distinct sounds and be symbolized separately in a pho-
nemic alphabet.

(2) Sound systems, as we know from observation, tend to be
somewhat symmetrical. Therefore a lack of symmetry at some point
in the system should be regarded with suspicion until the data can
be rechecked. The sound [ŋ], for example, does not occur initially
in syllables and this nonsymmetrical characteristic gives us pause
until we see that [-n] and [-ŋ] must be treated as distinct sounds
because of words like "run" and "rung."

(3) Sounds tend to fluctuate. Human beings cannot repeat
exactly any series of muscular movements. The articulatory move-
ments are no exception. If any fluctuation proves to be of this or
any related nonsignificant variety, it should not be recorded in a
practical orthography. Note, for example, the variation between the
optional presence and absence of a puff of breath after [t] at the
end of a sentence such as "He was hit."

(4) Characteristic sequences of sounds exert pressure on the
phonemic interpretation of other sequences. By experience we find
that the interpretation of some sequences of sounds is almost never
in doubt, but that we must regard certain other sequences with

suspicion until the available evidence is carefully studied, since their interpretation varies from language to language. For any particular language the interpretation of its doubtful sequences is, in general, assumed to parallel the interpretation of its nondoubtful ones. Thus the aspiration following a [p-] at the beginning of a word in English is assumed to be nonpertinent since [ph] parallels the occurrence of [b-], [n-], etc.

Adequate techniques of phonemic analysis necessitate acceptable work habits. Erratic gathering and weighing of data results in incorrect conclusions—especially so for those procedures in which one must argue from the lack of evidence. The requisite habits may be instilled by requiring the student to work many easy problems by proper methods. Similarly, the student needs good judgment to decide between alternatives when two conclusions are both theoretically valid but not equally advantageous. This judgment can be built up by directed problem solving.

Some of the problems can be chosen from actual language data, provided that the information is not made so profuse that the student needs too much time to handle it, provided he does not become confused by extraneous irregularities, and provided the data are presented in such a way that he can assume for the purpose of that problem that *all* the data are present so that he can legitimately argue from silence.

Controlled data of this type are not readily procured, since the sounds and the difficulties must be introduced in a graded series with each problem solvable by the premises and procedures presented up to that time. For this reason it proves convenient to utilize hypothetical problems which can be constructed with any desired degree of difficulty, and without distracting complications.[2]

In order to be successful in the field, the student must have developed adequate habits and judgment. In addition, however, he needs an enthusiasm for discovering the unknown. Without a research attitude which sends him with eagerness to a strange unwritten tongue, he is unlikely to progress very far or very satisfactorily in its analysis. Such enthusiasm may be hard to instill

[2] For sample problems see Kenneth L. Pike, *Phonemics, A Technique for Reducing Languages to Writing;* University of Michigan Publications, Linguistics, Vol. III. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1947.

directly—but it is highly contagious; this personal characteristic
the Institute watches in choosing its staff.

For preparing material for publication in the technical journals,
however, more than enthusiasm is needed. Hints and patterns of
acceptable articles are given to the students of the beginning sessions.
During a second summer more attention is paid to this last topic.
Rapid reading for acquaintance with the leading articles in the
field, further study with informants, and the submitting of tentative
phonemic descriptions for seminar discussion help to prepare the
student for more thorough technical writing and for a more certain
practical application of theory in the field. With proper training
he can discover the pertinent units of sound—the phonemes—and
record them in a usable orthography. From such research, spring
many of the practical goals which the educator or anthropologist
may have in view.

LATIN AS A MEDIUM FOR TEACHING LANGUAGE

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1.0 A student's first foreign language may be a means of teaching him about language itself and about the proper approach to the learning of languages. No better medium can be found for this than Latin; even those who have studied another language can find it very useful. A few of the many opportunities it offers are listed here.

2.0 The wide differences in structure between Latin and English open the way for teaching about cultural relativity; such a study is essential for the student of language.

2.1 Results of the effort to impose Latin grammar on English clearly show the unsoundness of such a procedure involving any two languages. *E.g.*, such standard English expressions as "He was given the book" are discouraged because they do not accord with Latin usage.

2.2 Troubles with alphabets can be illustrated. Latin used *v* for both consonant and vowel. Since English customarily uses *u* for the vowel in writing Latin, we should write *qvī, svāvis, svādeō,* not *quī, suāvis, suādeō.*

3.0 Phonetics and phonemics may be taught through many phenomena.

3.1 Latin has short open *o* as in *omnis,* which does not rhyme with *amnis.* This *o,* of course, is not heard in most standard American speech.

3.2 Latin has long consonants and always marks them (as does Italian). *E.g.*, there is one phoneme /r/ in *erō* and another /rr/ in *errō.*

3.3 Latin initial *p, b, t, d* were non-aspirate; students may learn to control such initial non-aspirates though their normal speech is likely to aspirate them more or less heavily.

3.4 Long *a* and short *a* are separate phonemes in Latin, differing not in the quality but in the quantity of the vowel. *Cf. mānibus,* "shades," and *manibus,* "hands."

4.0 Many morphemic elements not found in English are found in Latin. (Conversely, some used in English are not used in Latin.)

4.1 Extensive use of final elements in common inflections.

4.2 Prefixed elements as in reduplicated perfects, *e.g.*, *pepulī*.

4.3 Internal elements such as the *–ā–* in past perfects like *vīderās*. This *–ā–* is combined with another internal element *–b–* as in *vidēbās*. *Cf.* also the aorist *–s–* in *dīxī*

4.4 Vowel change as in *legō*, *lēgī*.

4.5 Various forms of morpheme alternants. *E.g.*, present imperative 2nd singular may be *e*-grade of the thematic vowel as in *lege;* or it may be zero grade as in *es, dā*. Observe also the vocative singular of *o*-stems, which is the *e*-grade, *e.g.*, *Mārce*.

4.6 No evidence for pitch as a morphemic element.

4.7 Word order not a grammatical element. *Puellam videt puer* is the same as *Puer videt puellam*.

5.0 Ablaut series and semantic studies of them. *E.g.*, *tegō, toga, tēgula*, "roof tile"; *mentem, moneō*.

6.0 Contamination of inflections. *E.g.*, variation of *-iō* verbs between third and fourth conjugation, *audiēbam* vs. *audībam;* adoption by consonant stems of many *i*-stem forms, *e.g.*, every dative-ablative plural in *-ibus;* every nominative plural in *-ēs*.[1]

[This is a significant paper in that it gives a clue to the sources of value in Latin, to which Latin teachers have long reacted and of which they are aware. Modern linguistic science is showing, on the other hand, that the teaching of English in the format of Latin grammar has been a detriment in that it gives a false interpretation of English grammar.

The article suggests that the Latin teacher should concentrate in part on the *diversity* of structure rather than the *likeness* of structure, and that it is this very contrast which opens the student's eyes to characteristics of his own system which he has taken for granted for years.

We should look forward to the day when the teaching of such non-Indo-European languages as Japanese and Chinese might through further and wider contrasts intensify the student's cultural appreciation of the intricacies of the English system.

The practical point then for the teacher is that instead of saying, "*I* is nominative because Latin has nominative," he may say, "Note the contrast between a system such as Latin, which indicates the actor of the sentence by a mechanical means (*i.e.*, a suffix), and a system such as English, in which the clue to the actor in 'Bill hit John' is the fact that the subject precedes the verb."

Such an approach might well justify the retention of the study of Latin in the schools in the face of its loss of prestige, so that it can be made to contribute with great effectiveness from the modern scientific point of view. K.L.P.]

[1] John F. Gummere, "Third Declension, Worse Confounded," *Classical Weekly*, 39:142–43, March 18, 1946.

THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE PROGRAM OF THE ARMY JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN [1]

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THE BASIC MATERIALS AND METHODS underlying the spoken language programs given to the students of the Army Japanese Language School, the ASTP unit, and the Civil Affairs Training School at the University of Michigan were developed in 1943 and the early part of 1944. The materials used in the programs were changed from time to time in accordance with changing conditions, the chief of which was the gradual shift from training for combat intelligence to training for the work of occupation. The following is a description of the spoken language program given to Classes V, VI, and VII of the Army Japanese Language School. These were the classes that received training both for combat intelligence and for occupation.

By May, 1944, when Class IV of the Army Japanese Language School had arrived in Ann Arbor, the staff had acquired enough experience with methods to adopt the oral-aural approach for beginners in the study of Japanese. The oral-aural approach means devoting the first five or six weeks to the spoken language without reference to written materials. The students memorize the spoken models with no attempt at grammatical analysis. They mimic in unison the instructor's pronunciation of the lesson materials at the beginning of each recitation. The advantages of such a procedure are that the students imitate a good model, the teacher instantly corrects pronunciation, and the subject matter is covered just prior to discussion. In contrast with this procedure, the usual one of individual reading and correction is time-consuming and does not affect, completely, the students who are not reading. In addition, the oral-aural approach means that nearly all of the work in the classroom

is carried on in the language which is being taught. In the Japanese School this meant that the students were flooded with the sounds of the language for four hours a day.

In the Japanese School, the materials initially used were those found in a booklet entitled *Introduction to Spoken Japanese,*[2] in which greetings, questions, and phrases are given in a series of short dialogues such as might occur in everyday life. Thus the students were given the ordinary directions necessary in conducting work in the classroom and phrases required in the home, in calling on someone else, in buying things, etc. Instead of explaining each phrase or sentence grammatically and using English in the explanation, the instructors asked the students to mimic the model pronunciations and to memorize each phrase or sentence. The students came out of this initial training with a clear concept of Japanese pronunciation. More important, they acquired a fund of phrases and sentences useful in the very elementary business of getting food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. When the time finally came for them to study the characters used in writing, in large measure they merely attached the writings to the pronunciations and meanings that they already knew.

The adoption of the oral-aural approach seemed justified in the results achieved. Conclusive figures based on the testing of large groups of students cannot be given, but the following data concerning civilian classes in Japanese at the university seem pertinent. A civilian class was started with the spoken language in the fall of 1943. During the entire first month the class concentrated on the spoken language and did nothing with the written. At the end of one semester, the class had covered 193 pages of reading material as against 147 for the previous class and had been exposed to 402 *kanzi* (Chinese characters used in writing Japanese) as against 296 for the previous class. The students in both classes were of only average ability. The fall class covered 36% more characters and read 31% more pages. Also, more work was done with the spoken language. The percentages of increase perhaps cannot be maintained, but the figures seem convincing enough to justify the adoption of the oral-

[2] *Introduction to Spoken Japanese* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945.

aural approach in dealing with beginning students of a second language.

This approach, moreover, would be valuable for students who have already had previous training in the language, but who have not been exposed to it for some time. Such students need at least two or three weeks of concentration on the spoken language before they arrive at any previously attained point of proficiency.

The emphasis on the use of spoken Japanese in the first exposure of students to that language did not mean that lectures and discussions in English were entirely ruled out. In a three or four week period, during which the *Introduction to Spoken Japanese* was the only text used, lectures were given at the rate of one a week. These lectures were based on Part I of my *Modern Conversational Japanese,*[3] in which the pronunciation of Japanese words is discussed. But even in the lectures, the students participated *en masse* in pronunciation drill using the illustrative Japanese words found both in *Modern Conversational Japanese* and in certain sheets entitled *Japanese Pronunciation Drill.*[4]

The oral-aural approach, with all that it means—the fixing of pronunciation habits, the memorizing of phrases and sentences that are useful in everyday life, and the mimicking in unison of the pronunciation of instructors—is followed by a second stage. In this stage ample recognition is given to the belief that the best drill should be based on an understanding of the structure of the language that is being studied.

In the first stage, the student may learn to say the Japanese equivalents for "How much is the fare?" without learning to say "How much is the bread?" In learning the series of Japanese sounds for "How much is the fare?" he does not necessarily discover what the Japanese word for *fare* is. Not knowing this, he does not know where in the Japanese sentence he may substitute the word *bread* for the word *fare.* Or, he may discover enough of the language to learn how the verb *be* is expressed in one situation, without learning at the same time that several ways of expressing *be* are found in

[3] J. K. Yamagiwa, *Modern Conversational Japanese,* McGraw-Hill, New York and London, 1942.
[4] *Japanese Pronunciation Drill* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945.

Japanese. Thus, it seems clear that better usage comes from better understanding, and that lectures are needed in which the Japanese language is gradually analyzed.

In the Japanese School, Parts II and III of *Modern Conversational Japanese* were used as the basic text for the lectures. But even more important was the first part of a series known as *Japanese Speech Patterns.*[5] These Speech Patterns successively illustrate with a multitude of examples the same points raised in Parts II and III of *Modern Conversational Japanese,* and were introduced into the schedule in the third or fourth week of instruction. In using *Speech Patterns,* the students were exposed each hour to a whole series of sentences that illustrate the same grammatical pattern; thus in one hour they might learn sentences of the type "I am a student," "You are a soldier," and "He is a doctor," and in the second hour sentences of the type "I am reading a book," "You are writing a letter," and "She is buying a book." The students learn that *am, are,* and *is,* and *am reading, are writing,* and *is buying* are constructed in the same way in Japanese. The order in which these patterns of usage are learned is generally from the more simple and frequent to the more complex; the least frequently used grammatical devices are covered at the end of this phase of the work.

A cardinal rule of the Japanese School was that in the classroom only Japanese was to be used. The theory that lies behind the adoption of this rule runs as follows: the students are forced to organize their ideas and to state them as native speakers would, to show independence and initiative in expressing themselves in Japanese, and to recall vocabulary and grammar constructions to which they have previously been exposed. Using English to any extent whatsoever breaks the concentration of a class conducted in Japanese and shortens the total time in which the students are speaking Japanese. Various suggestions were made in order to supplement and to clarify the rule that only Japanese was to be used. These suggestions were needed because inexperienced teachers were inclined to ask, "How

[5] *Japanese Speech Patterns,* part i, 1945; part ii, 1945; part iii, reentitled *Conversations in Japanese,* 1945; part iv, 1944; and part v, 1944, all in multigraphed editions, Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

can Japanese alone be used? How can we possibly avoid using English?" The suggestions had to do primarily with the conduct of the "speech pattern" hours when one of the chief aims was to get students to control successively more difficult constructions.

At the start of the "speech pattern" hours, the students were asked to mimic the sentences in *Speech Patterns* as spoken by the instructor. Corresponding sentences in *Modern Conversational Japanese* were also mimicked. This was followed by one or more of the following procedures:

a. The placing of the sentences in *Speech Patterns* in a story or anecdote was followed by the asking of a series of questions probing into the degree of comprehension by the students.

b. Dialogues among the students or between instructor and student were started with the sentences brought into the dialogue.

c. Particular sentences were converted into questions so phrased that the response would bring forth a repetition of the same forms.

d. If the various imperative forms were to be taught, the students were asked to use or to follow a succession of commands or requests.

e. Forms which had already been taught were brought into the discussion wherever they were related to the new materials.

Defining a Japanese word with an English word was frowned upon except in the case of the more abstract words which require long and elaborate explanations. Whenever there was doubt as to whether a student had comprehended the meaning of a noun, questions were asked as to the location, operation, composition, and description of the thing named by the noun. Verbs and descriptive words were tested by asking questions about the things with which these forms are most closely connected. Anecdotes were sometimes used to explain abstractions. English was used only as a last resort.

In trying further to fix the items to be learned, the instructors had the students form Japanese sentences using the particular patterns and vocabulary items. Here a premium was placed on ingenuity of statement and on variety of construction. This might be further followed by questioning on the part of teachers and students,

so that a semblance of actual conversation would be attained. Connected discourse bringing in additional uses of the forms was often undertaken near the end of the hour, by both the students and the teacher.

The successful correction of pronunciation was a major teaching problem. The instructors themselves were naturally affected by the speech forms current in various dialect areas; and keen observation of differences in pronunciation, beyond that which told an instructor that a student was speaking with a "foreign accent," was a matter requiring considerable perceptiveness and training. The attempt was to teach the standard pronunciation of Tokyo, that is, the pronunciation of persons who belong to the middle class or higher. But only twenty per cent of the instructors spoke a language that was close to the Tokyo standard; fully fifty per cent spoke a dialect that departed considerably from that of Tokyo. Most of the dialect speakers used the language of the Kansai area, which lies west of Kyoto. The members of the staff who were born in Japan (*isseis*) came largely from areas where dialects are spoken. Those born in the United States (*niseis*) had naturally been exposed to other dialects. Many of the *niseis* were sent to Japan for schooling, often to provincial schools near the original homes of their fathers and mothers. Not all of them were able to stay for extended periods of time in the Tokyo speech area. In correcting the pronunciation of students it was found that the instructors could be trusted to correct certain errors but not others. Those errors that could easily be corrected, without confusing the students, were errors no matter which dialect was taken as the norm. It was assumed that at those points where the instructors' dialects agreed, the corrections would be uniform. Those elements of Japanese speech which the instructors could thus freely correct were as follows:

    a. Pronouncing the Japanese *r* incorrectly. Most students found that the *r* (a "single-tap" *r*) was the most difficult single sound to control, but achieved complete control in a month or so.

    b. Making long vowels short and short vowels long. (Some deviations are current in certain dialect areas in Japan.)

    c. Making single consonants double and double consonants single.

d. Not nasalizing medial *g*. The nasalization, however, is not usually necessary for understanding, and in large areas of Japan the *g* is consistently "hard." If the medial nasalized *g* was not achieved, the students were allowed to pronounce the medial *g* "hard." Wrong pronunciation of medial *g*, that is, emphasizing the nasality and pronouncing it like *n* plus *g* is non-Japanese, and was corrected. The students in general required a certain amount of training before they were able to recognize medial *g*: they tended to confuse the sound with *n* and to write transcriptions like *-na, -ni, -ne,* and *-no* for syllables in which medial *g* occurred.

e. Alternating the accent in successive syllables. The students tended as in English to give recurrent pitch or stress accents to syllables at approximately even time intervals and this seemed to result in accents on alternate syllables.

In order to solve the problem of correcting pronunciation, further suggestions were made:

a. If the instructors were asked what the pitch pattern of a Japanese word was, they were counseled to tell the students what they themselves would say, not what they thought was right or wrong and not what they thought the pitch pattern of Tokyo was.

b. The instructors in beginning sections were asked to check each other's pronunciation and to arrive at some kind of uniformity before they went to class.

c. The instructors were also asked to send students who had special pronunciation difficulties to Dr. Hide Shohara, a member of the staff who had had considerable experience in speech correction and who guided the students individually during the supervised study hours. The Mirrophone often proved helpful.

d. An attitude of greater consciousness of pronunciation matters was encouraged.

As a matter of policy, an attempt was made to place instructors who spoke the Tokyo dialect in the beginning sections and to have at least one good speaker of the Tokyo standard in each of the more advanced groups. Variety was accepted in the higher sections, and there was also virtue in this, since in the field or in Japan, the trainees would necessarily speak with a variety of dialect speakers.

The third and final stage of work in the spoken language, which in part overlapped the second, began in the third month of instruction and consisted of a series of "Speech Hours." Here the chief objective was the development of fluency in speech. The material upon which the work was based now possessed greater content value; it was no longer in the form of isolated sentences [6] but always in the shape of connected discourse. The grammar, it was assumed, had now been learned; the grammar in the new materials was not organized pedagogically.

A basis for conversation was established. The students no longer were concerned with elementary matters; they now received training in the subject-matters, military or administrative, that would be their chief concern as they went into the field. The attempt was to strive for ready and easy use of speech, that is, of vocabulary and grammar items deftly used in the expression of ideas and feelings in several subject areas.

Even before the series of texts known as *Speech Patterns* was finished, a spoken language program was initiated which used the reading lesson of the day as a basis for conversation. After reading their lessons in the morning, the students returned in the afternoon and discussed a topic that was suggested by the lesson. The following are examples of the topics used on certain lessons in the second volume of the readers that were used: [7]

Tōkyō de mitai mono (The things I want to see in Tokyo)	Lesson 1 (*Tōkyō*)
Amerika no sabaku (Deserts of America)	Lesson 5 (*Sabaku no hanasi*)
Nihon no otogibanasi (Japanese fairy tales)	Lessons 6, 12, 19 (Fairy tales)
Bakemono no hanasi (Ghost stories)	Lesson 9 (*Hagoromo*)
Kanzi kitigai (Kanzi-crazy—an enthusiast in learning Chinese characters)	Lesson 29 (*Kanzi*)

[6] Actually, the materials in *Conversations in Japanese* (part iii of the *Japanese Speech Patterns*), is in dialogue or conversational form.

[7] Naoe Naganuma, *Hyozyun Nihongo Tokuhon* (Standard Japanese Readers), lithoprinted edition, Ann Arbor, v. d. This series of readers runs to seven volumes. Only volumes I–IV were used in the Japanese Language School.

Using the reading lessons as the basis for the Speech Hours meant that students received considerable speech training by the time they covered the fifth and concluding part of *Speech Patterns*. When the Speech Hours based on the reading lessons and the five sets of *Speech Patterns* were finished, and this took as long as eight months for beginners, they had learned the fundamentals of standard, honorific, humble, and informal speech. They were now ready for a series of specialized materials, all cast in dialogue or conversational form, which projected them into the future, so that they could consistently picture themselves using Japanese in both informal and formal situations, talking easily in everyday conversation at first, then proceeding to more technical uses of the language. The emphasis gradually came to be centered on military and administrative situations. The starting point was almost always a dialogue or conversation, that is, an active language situation in which two or more persons are talking with each other. There was much liveliness and actuality in the dialogues; a humdrum statement of facts was avoided.

The first materials in this category were the *Informal Conversations in Japanese, Including Plays and Movie Synopses*.[8] Here, the ready give-and-take language of the street, home, and shop was abundantly illustrated. The plays and movie synopses, when coupled with the viewing of the movies that they described, led to a knowledge of Japanese life.

Parallel with or following the *Informal Conversations* were *The Geography of Japan*,[9] *Military Conversations in Japanese*,[10] and *Conversations in Japanese for Military Government Officers*.[11] The materials were technical, and the vocabulary was professional and

[8] *Informal Conversations in Japanese, Including Plays and Movie Synopses* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945; part i, texts; part ii, vocabulary and grammar notes.

[9] *The Geography of Japan* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1944; part i, text; part ii, maps and word-lists.

[10] *Military Conversations in Japanese* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945; part i, text; part ii, vocabulary.

[11] *Conversations in Japanese for Military Government Officers* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945; part i, text; part ii, vocabulary and grammar notes.

useful; the students at all times dealt with materials that would be important in their future work.

The procedure thus described provided something to talk about. It took into account the fact that nothing is so deadly as a series of so-called free conversation hours for which no preparation has been made. Invariably the conversation in such hours turns to such time-worn questions as "What is your home city? What do you find there? What are the names of the schools that you went to?" Such questioning and answering usually becomes inane and silly.

Before the end of the course, regardless of the amount of spoken language material covered by the students, a total of twenty-five or thirty hours was devoted to the study and use of a selection from the topographical sheets issued by the Imperial Japanese Land Survey. The purpose was to show the nature of some of the obstructions that might be met in the case of invasion. With the less proficient students the amount of work that could be done with these topographical sheets was necessarily limited. But with the best students, matters of tactical military content and matters of military government could be discussed. All students acquired a sound knowledge of the 120 or more symbols used on the sheets, and an equally sound knowledge of the Japanese words and characters which describe the symbols.

For the Speech Hours questions were prepared by the teachers or by the students, the students gave talks on subjects about which they had read, and debates and discussion groups were formed when controversial issues were raised. At all times failure to follow the forms of good usage led to correction by the teacher.

Once a week the Speech Hours were based on compositions written by the students. These compositions were used as guides in speech-making. At all times the emphasis was on the use of the vocabulary and grammar which had been learned by the student in connection with his oral work. Thus the compositions served as an additional check on the progress of the student.

Vocabulary lists as a basis for Speech Hours were of only limited use. *Doi's Basic Japanese-English List* [12] is conveniently arranged

[12] Found as a leaflet in K. Doi, *Basic Japanese*, Rokuseikwan, Tokyo, 1935.

under various subject-headings, such as the human body, plants, animals, society, etc. Unfortunately the listings consist almost entirely of nouns, whereas the verbs and adjectives naturally used with these nouns are never given with them, so that rapid-fire questioning-and-answering could not be carried on. An attempt to correct the shortcomings of the Doi list was made in compiling *A Basic English-Japanese Vocabulary of Words Arranged According to Subjects.*[13] This vocabulary became the basis of *A Japanese Picture Dictionary,*[14] for which Dr. Joseph D. Sasaki, a member of the staff, drew 59 plates of pictures illustrating all sorts of words and actions. Special word-lists were compiled by the staff when the technical nature of some of the instruction in military and administrative affairs required them.[15]

Japanese films were shown on an average of almost once a week throughout the history of the Japanese School. Each film was shown at least three times. Insofar as possible, a synopsis in English was issued beforehand so that a reasonably clear idea of the characters and action might be had. At the showings, the students were seated with their instructors. During the first showing, breaks at the end

[13] *A Basic English-Japanese Vocabulary of Words Arranged According to Subjects* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945.

[14] Joseph D. Sasaki, *A Japanese Picture Dictionary* (multigraphed edition), Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1945; part i, pictures; part ii, vocabulary.

[15] The following word-lists were compiled by the staff of the Japanese Language School:

    a. *A Basic English-Japanese Military Vocabulary* (multigraphed edition), 1945.

    b. *A Glossary of Censorship and Communications Terms in Japanese* (mimeographed edition), Ann Arbor, n. d.

    c. *An English-Japanese Glossary of Geographical Terms* (multigraphed edition), 1944.

    d. *Terms for Japanese History* (Japanese to English) (mimeographed edition), 1944.

    e. *A Place-name List for the Japanese Empire* (multigraphed edition), 1944.

    f. *Vocabulary on Architecture* (English to Japanese and Japanese to English) (multigraphed edition), n. d.

    g. *An English-Japanese Glossary of Industrial Terms* (multigraphed edition), 1944.

    h. *Vocabulary on Communication* (English to Japanese and Japanese to English) (multigraphed edition), n. d.

of every two reels or so allowed the students to ask questions of their instructors. Even during the actual showing, questions could be asked. On the day following the first showing, students were given a true-false test on the factual details of the movie, and in discussion they were asked to describe the action. After the second showing the students were asked to talk on the nature of the characters, the social system depicted, etc. During the second and third showings, recordings were sometimes made of the more interesting scenes. The third discussion, after the third showing, often centered on these passages. Sometimes the discussion was devoted to the techniques employed in the making of Japanese films.

Lantern lectures were sometimes given in place of movies. In a typical lantern lecture hour, the lecturer gave three short lectures on different subjects. Each lecture was followed by a short true-false examination. The first lecture was given in very simple Japanese on a relatively simple subject. The second and third lectures were progressively more difficult both in language and in subject-matter. In this way students of varying proficiency could be accommodated, and instructors could find out the relative abilities of the students.

Speech contests were a valuable supplement in the advanced work. All students competed in the first contest, giving short extemporaneous talks. Winners were judged on the basis of pronunciation, content, sentence structure, and delivery. Two winners selected from each section competed against the other section winners. The final contest was made up of prepared speeches five minutes in length.

The impression created by the foregoing description of the spoken language program may be that it was unusually heavy, with the students exposed to a great quantity of material. However, as long as the reading lessons for the day were the basis for the Speech Hours, the students tried to increase their use of the vocabulary and grammar found in the reading lessons. By the end of the third term (after nine months) the best students were able to take fresh materials for the Speech Hours, and in the fourth term were able to take most of the new materials in *kanzi* and *kana*, that is, in characters instead of in romanization. The gradation was from simple to complex materials. The School relied to a great extent on multiple exposure. The program was aimed at more or less filling the stu-

dents' ears with Japanese and hoping for a great increase in control. The opposite procedure would have been to limit the grammar and vocabulary. The School tended to favor the former procedure, partly because past attempts at compiling really serviceable word-lists have not been successful. They do not cover the greetings and preliminaries that start any conversation. The words listed are often given single translations covering perhaps the chief use and no more. Finally, no one can get along on the thousand or so words that are usually given. The School tried to teach its students a broad basic vocabulary. The words found in the elementary texts pertained to the body, dress, dwellings, food, drink, etc. Various cultural aspects of Japanese life were then taken up. Specialization in the fields of geography, the military, and civil administration followed. Since it was also necessary to teach grammar and to try to have the students arrive at the greatest possible flexibility in the use of grammar, our task was by no means easy. The number of permutations and combinations possible for the inflected forms of the language, not to mention the particles, is simply tremendous. To create acceptable habits of usage in these forms calls for the best teaching procedures.

The majority of students will never talk exactly like native speakers, but even a poor student can be taught to talk Japanese so that he may express not only his basic desires but gather information of importance. Though errors in pronunciation, grammar, or word usage should never be condoned, the drive toward fluency sometimes means that accuracy is made secondary. The teacher sometimes takes refuge in the thought that even a little knowledge of a foreign language may make it useful to an intelligent user. Fortunately, in the Army Japanese Language School, the students were of high intelligence. Much more can be done with such students than with the usual run of students. The best students finally began to talk with fluency and phonetic accuracy.

A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING POSTVOCALIC AMERICAN ENGLISH [l] TO SPANISH AMERICANS

Betty Jane Wallace

University of Michigan

IN TEACHING the pronunciation of a foreign language one of the most difficult errors to correct is that of phonetic substitution which does not result in semantic confusion. This mispronunciation results in much of the so-called "foreign accent," *i.e.*, a strangeness which is easy for a native speaker to note as being different, but which does not confuse his understanding of what the foreigner is saying. Such a sound is the variety of postvocalic *l* used by Spanish speakers in words like *meal, bill, sale, tell, shall, doll, cool, full, bowl, call, mile, towel, soil, mule, milk, film, cold, colt.*

The Spanish speaker will substitute his so-called "clear" *l* in all of these words with a resulting sound peculiar to American ears but not strange enough to be confused with any other sound in the language. There is no confusion between *tell* as the Spanish speaker pronounces it and as a native speaker of English pronounces it—none of the sort of confusion that occurs when a foreigner substitutes his /i/ vowel for the English /ɪ/ making such words as *bit* sound somewhat like *beat*.

Naturally in teaching pronunciation it is essential to concentrate first on the phonemic distinctions such as /i/ and /ɪ/, /s/ and /z/, and so forth. For advanced students, however, who desire to speak English with as little foreign flavor as possible, it is important to overcome the non-phonemic peculiarities of speech.

In the formulation of pronunciation exercises, the phonetic differences between Spanish and English postvocalic *l* must be considered first. Spanish *l* is produced with the tip and blade of the tongue spread out against the upper gum with a good deal of muscular pressure. The English postvocalic *l* is made with the tip of the tongue against the upper gum, the middle of the tongue rather low, and with very little pressure. Moreover, the transition from the preceding vowel to the *l* tends to be slower than in Spanish.

In classroom drill, therefore, articulatory position, tongue pressure, and transition speed need to be emphasized. A typical set of exercises could proceed as follows:

(1) The teacher pronounces the word *eel* very slowly diphthongizing the vowel even to the point of making two separate syllables:

[ˈiːəl]. The students pronounce the word in imitation of the teacher. This same thing can be done with a list of words such as *ale, Al, all, oil, owl, I'll,* so that the students gain flexibility in pronouncing vowel plus *l*. At the same time the teacher observes the tongue position of each student, trying to make sure that the student raises only the tongue tip and applies only slight pressure.

(2) The above exercise is repeated with words in which the vowel sound is preceded by a consonant sound: *meal* [ˈmiːəl], *sale, coal, fall, fool,* and so on.

(3) A third set of words is introduced, this time with the *l* followed by another consonant: *field, cold, colt, feels, called,* and so on, using all the combinations of *l* plus consonant which occur postvocalically in English.[1]

(4) After the student has firm control of the articulatory position for English *l* he can practice words like *tell, fill, full, dull,* and so forth, in which the transition from the vowel to the *l* is a little more rapid. Students should be cautioned to keep the middle of the tongue in a rather low position even though it may be somewhat higher than after other vowels.

(5) Consonant combinations with the preceding type of word can be practiced next: *milk, film, felt,* and so forth.

(6) The final step is to use the words in sentences and connected discourse. Patterns such as the following have been found useful:

Student A. Was it a good *meal?*

      B. Yes, it was a good *meal.*[2]

      C. No, it wasn't a good *meal.*

Student D. Did he *tell* you a story?

      E. Yes, he *told* us a story.

      F. No, he didn't *tell* us a story.

Student G. The *bowl* is *old.*

      H. Is the *bowl old?*

      I. Yes, the *bowl's old.*

Student J. How do you *feel?*

      K. I *feel* fine.

      L. I don't *feel* very *well.*

[1] For such combinations see C. C. Fries, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1945. p. 18 (footnote 6).

[2] Care must be taken to ensure a falling intonation glide on this single syllable at the end of the utterance. This also helps lengthen the transition between the vowel and the *l.* Thus the word is drawled out: [miːəl].

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTES

The Fourth Annual SUMMER SCHOOL FOR SWEDISH STUDIES will be conducted at North Park College, Chicago, from June 28 to August 20, 1948. The feature of the school is a concentrated course in the Swedish language, designed to give students, in eight weeks, a working knowledge of the language. Lectures on Swedish culture, history, and contemporary movements are also in the curriculum. A descriptive circular is available.

The 1948 LINGUISTIC INSTITUTE will be held in Ann Arbor from June 21 through August 14 under the auspices of the Linguistic Society of America and the University of Michigan. Courses will be offered in the following subjects:

Introduction to linguistics, practical and instrumental phonetics, phonemics, descriptive morphology, types of linguistic structure.

Field methods in linguistics, linguistic geography, dialectology.

Indo-European comparative grammar, problems in Indo-Hittite, Sanskrit, Old Irish, Gothic, Old Icelandic, Old English, Modern English, American English, historical grammar of Spanish, Old French dialects.

Chinese phonemics, morphology, and syntax.

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language, modern trends in language teaching, English for Latin American and Chinese students.

There will be two evening meetings a week and a weekly luncheon conference. A summer meeting of the Linguistic Society of America will be held July 30-31.

The American Council of Learned Societies has appropriated $3,000 for scholarships and fellowships. Scholarships are intended primarily to cover tuition and coach fare, but in some cases the stipend may be larger. There will be several postdoctoral fellowships of $400 or $500.

There is no application form. Applicants should submit statements concerning their particular interests and past preparation, accompanied by letters of recommendation from scholars with whom the applicant has worked, to Hans Kurath, Angell Hall, University of Michigan. Applications should be presented as soon as possible.

The fifteenth session of the SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS will be held at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, from June 7 through August 20, 1948. The Institute specializes in the application of linguistic theory to the practical problems of reducing to writing those languages which as yet have no literature. The courses should be of interest to students of anthropology who wish to record names of ethnological materials in indigenous languages, teachers of modern languages who wish drills in phonemic or morphological analysis, and missionaries who desire training in the techniques of preparing literature for illiterate tribes. Students may enter the courses as regular members of the University summer session.

THOMAS, CHARLES K. *An Introduction to the Phonetics of American English*. New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1947. ix + 181 pp.

This book is intended for the teaching of the phonetics of American English in courses in speech for colleges and universities. As such it is a major contribution to the speech field. It discusses rather fully the mechanism of speech, giving a physiological analysis of the sounds of American English, as well as material for the study of the regional distribution of these sounds.

The chapters on stress and quantity are a welcome addition, as are the detailed chapters on processes of change. The book concludes with a discussion of regional dialects, including examples in transcription and a short chapter on standards of pronunciation. The author also provides, either in footnotes or at the ends of chapters, an abundance of references for further study.

As a teaching instrument the book may well encounter many differences of opinion as to the value of its organization. The "easy" sounds are introduced first, and the sounds which have unusual graphs or are more difficult of analysis are left to later lessons. Such an organization means that [p, b, m, f, v, t, d, n, l] are studied in one chapter and [s, k, g, i, ɪ, ɔ] in the next. It would be extremely difficult for a teacher to use the book in the accustomed order, because of the exercise materials, which are at the end of each chapter.

There are other points about which there may be considerable disagreement:

Although the author recognizes the phoneme—"the noun *phoneme* refers to the distinctive phonetic elements of the word"—he does not clearly differentiate between phonetic and phonemic transcription throughout the book. The transcription used is essentially a "broad phonetic transcription." It neither shows the student the systematic or phonemic features of a dialect, nor gives him a clear picture of the significant sub-phonemic variants which are so essential in American dialect study. For this reason the examples of transcription of regional dialects at the end of the book are not of much use. Phonetics and phonemics must be kept distinct, even in elementary texts.

Turning from consideration of the value of this book as a classroom text, we must evaluate it as a contribution to the highly technical study of American dialects.

Professor Thomas has made available the results of his extensive research in the field of American pronunciation (seven thousand case records from every state in the country). We are not told, however, what criteria were used in selecting the informants—a desirable thing to know whenever the conclusions contradict some of the results of the *Linguistic Atlas*.[1] For example:

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[1] *Linguistic Atlas* as used in this review refers to the *Linguistic Atlas of New England* (Hans Kurath, editor, Brown University, Providence, R.I., 1939–41) and to the unpublished materials for the Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic states.

p. 154—"In the *wh* words, like *whistle* and *whisper,* the substitution of [w] for [hw] . . . is most frequent in the larger cities, less frequent in smaller cities and rural areas."

The New England *Atlas,* however, shows that this feature occurs in a very narrow coastal belt running *north of Boston.* Other *Linguistic Atlas* material shows that the feature is current in eastern Long Island, Metropolitan New York City, New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the eastern shore of Maryland. The feature would seem to be a coastal, not an urban characteristic.

p. 69—"Except in New England and the New York City area [æ] also occurs as an occasional variant of [ε] in such words as *bear* and *fair.*"

The statement does not tell us whether [æ] is an allophone of /ε/ before /-r/, or whether there is free variation between the phonemes /æ/ and /ε/ before /-r/ in some dialects. This type of statement tends to confuse a student trying to understand the phonemic system of a dialect.

Furthermore, the /æ/ phoneme is regular in words of the type *bear* and *fair* in north-eastern New England as far south as Massachusetts Bay, and in the South and South Midland except for southern Maryland, the lower Cape Fear in North Carolina, and Charleston, South Carolina. /æ/ is also common in western New England, but less frequent in the New England settlement areas in New York State and Pennsylvania.

The description of the regional distribution of the dialects of American English is open to much argument: for example, southern Illinois and southern Indiana are included in Southern American. Does this mean that the speakers in these areas have an *r*-less dialect similar in most respects to that of Richmond or Charleston? The difficulty is two-fold. First, Professor Thomas does not give us clear-cut criteria for his dialect divisions although one infers that he uses differences in phonemic organization. It would have been helpful if he had shown that the dialect geographer must deal with three levels of pronunciation differences: structural or systematic differences, differences in the incidence of phonemes in words, and sub-phonemic or non-distinctive differences. Second, there is difficulty in the description of "General American." The assumption that the greater part of the United States speaks a uniform dialect is an extreme simplification, especially since we must deal with vast areas of recent settlement. As our knowledge of American dialects has increased, we have recognized the greater divergence in American speech; and as the study of American dialects progresses, we can hope for more detailed knowledge of the speech of the great blank part of the dialect map, now commonly labeled "General American."

A final criticism of the book is the use that the author makes of the term "substandard." Frequently he applies it to features which, according to the *Linguistic Atlas,* are accepted in cultivated speech. For example:

p. 75—"In the substandard speech of the deep South and of the New York City area the stressed [ɜ] sometimes acquires the diphthongal pronunciation [ɜɪ] . . . "

The *Linguistic Atlas* shows that [ɜɪ] occurs in the speech of the upper-class in New York City and in the Southern plantation area. In New York City it is not the phonetic variant which is substandard, but the phoneme /ɜɪ/, which represents the coalescence of the /ɜ/ and /ɔɪ/ phonemes of other dialects.

p. 40—"The principal native difficulty [in pronouncing the /t/ phoneme] is a tendency to weaken the sound, especially in the middle of a word. [t] may then change to a kind of [d], to a variety of [r] made with a single tap of the tongue against the gum ridge, or to a laryngeal click known as a glottal stop. Or it may vanish completely. The careless pronunciation of such words as *little, better, facts, mountain,* and *bottle* illustrate these weakened forms."

The glottal stop is, in New York City for instance, a "substandard" pronunciation. But what about the voiced *t* or the alveolar flap? In the *Linguistic Atlas* records for the Middle Atlantic States the word *little* occurs invariably with either one of these variants. What should then be the standard for the people from this area? Professor Thomas says that it is the speech of the upper class. In that case, the voiced *t* and the alveolar flap must be recognized as standard positional variants of the /t/ phoneme.

In spite of these detailed criticisms from the point of view of the dialect geographer, it should not be overlooked that Professor Thomas's book contains much material which shows notable progress among textbooks in its field. As merely one example, the recognition of regional standards of American pronunciation could be profitably adopted as a basis for new teaching procedures in many speech and phonetics classes.

Y.H.F. and A.L.D.

CHAO, YUEN REN, and YANG, LIEN SHENG. *Concise Dictionary of Spoken Chinese.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1947. xxxix + 292 pp.

Y. R. Chao and L. S. Yang's *Concise Dictionary of Spoken Chinese* is written both for the layman and the linguist. It is not only the first dictionary that deals with Mandarin (Standard Chinese) descriptively and scientifically, but it is also the first one that discusses the structure of Chinese according to descriptive linguistic analysis.

Special attention should be paid to the Foreword and the Introduction in which the authors explain in detail the unique features of this dictionary: (1) With few exceptions the entries are morphemes. Thus the grammatical function, *e.g.,* free form, bound form, etc., can be clearly shown. (2) The linguistic structure of Chinese, *e.g.,* types of complements, etc., is explained and

illustrated. (3) Particles, such as *.le*, *.de*, etc., are described in great detail. (4) The section on the rules of tone sandhi deserves special recognition. It is an interesting summary of Dr. Chao's original findings accumulated and tested during the last thirty years.

For a person whose interest extends beyond the mere knowledge of a faithful record of current, spoken Mandarin, each entry in the dictionary furnishes stylistic aid and information on ancient pronunciation. Furthermore, he will find that in many cases the original form of the main character is given alongside the main character.

"The body of the dictionary is arranged according to the order of the commonly accepted system of 214 radicals. . . . The order of characters in each group is by the number of residual strokes. . . . Characters with the same radical and same number of residual strokes are arranged alphabetically according to pronunciation." At the bottom of the pages are the twelve most frequent radicals in their most frequent forms. "To insure further the finding of the characters, the authors have entered each character under all its apparently possible radicals and made a cross-reference to the main entry." The above matters of arrangement in addition to Appendix I and Appendix III will facilitate finding any character in the dictionary. Furthermore, the National Romanization System is given alongside the Wade-Giles System in Appendix I, part 2. The popular and cursive forms of many characters, as well as the Soochow numerals and the National Phonetic Letters, are also included and recorded as dictionary entries, so that foreign students of Chinese will have one less problem to solve.

In summary, this excellent dictionary is the first one of its kind since the beginning of Chinese-European lexicography in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Chang Pei Lo and Y. S.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography will present some of the basic works in modern linguistic science with a short commentary on each. It is intended mainly to help the beginner in orienting himself in the scientific study of language. After sufficient background material has been presented, this department will include textbooks and other practical works in the field.

BLOCH, BERNARD, and TRAGER, GEORGE L. *Outline of Linguistic Analysis*. Baltimore: Linguistic Society of America, 1942. 82 pp.

The most direct and concise introduction to descriptive linguistics. Technical and sometimes difficult in its very conciseness, the monograph nevertheless presents a consistent method of analysing phonological, morphological, and syntactic data. The appended reading list is excellent.

BLOOMFIELD, LEONARD. *Outline Guide for the Practical Study of Foreign Languages*. Baltimore: Linguistic Society of America, 1942. 16 pp.

This sixteen page booklet is a concise guide for learning languages from native speakers (informants) when satisfactory textbooks are not readily available. It is a most valuable item for any teacher of language. It is written in clear non-technical English.

EATON, HELEN S. *Semantic Frequency List*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940. xxi + 441 pp.

A semantic frequency list correlating the first six thousand entries in four languages: English, French, German, and Spanish. The book can be a useful tool for those interested in using vocabulary lists for the preparation of language lessons.

FRIES, CHARLES C., KITCHIN, AILEEN TRAVER, and FRENCH, VIRGINIA. *Syllabus for English through Practice*. Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947. Part I, pp. 1-212, Part II, pp. 213-522.

The practical classroom exercises in this book, dealing with matters of pronunciation and structure within a limited vocabulary, provide an excellent "self-teaching textbook" for use by teachers of English as a foreign language. It is primarily for beginning students and can be used in classes that meet only a few times a week. The basic principles underlying the *Syllabus* are those stated fully by Fries in *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*.

SAPIR, EDWARD. *Language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1921 & 1939. vii + 258 pp.

An excellent book for the beginner in linguistic science. It is simple yet thorough and is rich with examples from many different types of languages. In many respects this book, though not recent, anticipates modern structural linguistics.

READERS' EXCHANGE

Dear Sirs:

Due to the fact that so many foreign students have difficulty with the American idiom, I am making a collection of idioms current in American English regardless of the place of their origin. I plan to use for my source books, magazines, newspapers, etc., published since 1940. . . . If I am fortunate enough to be able to get my hands on transcriptions of actual conversations, I shall use those too.

The glossary will give definitions, citations, phonetic transcriptions of the pronunciation of the idiom in colloquial speech . . . , and a frequency rating of the idiom.

Michigan State College   Yours truly,
East Lansing, Michigan   ˅   John N. Winburne

[Mr. Winburne also suggests that *Language Learning* print regular lists of such studies in progress. This seems an excellent suggestion, and we are able to add, from local sources, the names of two studies which will appear shortly:

Fries, Charles C., *The English Sentence: An Introduction to the Structure of English Utterances.*

Pike, Kenneth L., *Tone Languages.*

We will be glad to print the names of any studies in which our other readers may be engaged.]

Dear Sirs:

In your refreshing publication, p. 30, you list a couple of gems to be translated. I'm sure there must be many more. My favorite, offhand, is the one in one of Cornelia Otis Skinner's books—she says she found it in an old Balkan phrase book: "Halt! My postilion has just been struck by lightning!" A distressing situation, to be sure, if an unusual one. Another old favorite is "Have you declared your fowling-piece at the customs?"

Incidentally, I grow more and more concerned about teaching the full conjugations of verbs that are surely defective, and not recognized as such. Under what conditions, for example, would a Spaniard say *mori*? Or *naceré*?

Knox College   Yours truly,
Galesburg, Illinois   Lawrence Poston, Jr.

Dear Sirs:

May I add my compliments to those you are no doubt receiving from many quarters on the excellence of the first issue of *Language Learning*. The magazine seems to fill a real need, and it is good to see increased attention being given to the practical application of linguistic science.

Random House, Inc.   Yours truly,
New York 22, N.Y.   Jess Stein

[*Language Learning* takes this opportunity to thank Mr. Stein and its other well-wishers.]

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